

Message Text

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ORIGIN HA-05

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 199862

INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM

SUBJECT: RELATIONSHIP OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TO US AND
OTHER GOVERNMENTS

1. THE DEPARTMENT IS POUCHING TO ALL POSTS THE SPEECH OF
THE CHAIRMAN OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S INTERNATIONAL
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON APRIL 1. AMONG THE VARIOUS POINTS
THE STATEMENT SEEKS TO CLARIFY IS AI'S RELATIONSHIP TO
"FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS." IT STATES: "WE MUST REMAIN
IMPARTIAL, EVEN TO OUR FRIENDS. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT COULD BE SEEN AS A PROBLEM. LET
ME SUMMARIZE OUR VIEW ON PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS
POLICY. FIRST, WE APPRECIATE HIS EFFORTS TO MAKE HUMAN
RIGHTS A QUESTION OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN. THIS PRINCIPLE
WAS ALREADY RECOGNIZED IN 1948 BY THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THE FRAMERS OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION
KNEW THAT REPRESSION WITHIN A COUNTRY IS NOT AN AFFAIR ONLY
FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THAT COUNTRY, BUT FOR THE INTER-
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NATIONAL COMMUNITY AS WELL. THE CURRENT U.S. ADMINISTRA-
TION HAS UNDERLINED THAT, AND WE APPRECIATE IT. SECOND,
WE CERTAINLY APPRECIATE EVERY CONCRETE RESULT THAT ANY
MEMBER OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT CAN GET BY DIRECT PRESSURE ON
OTHER GOVERNMENTS. BUT WE DO NOT WANT TO SEE HUMAN RIGHTS
BECOME MONOPOLIZED BY ANY ONE GOVERNMENT IN THE WORLD.

WE DO NOT WANT HUMAN RIGHTS TO BECOME WESTERNIZED OR AMERICANIZED. IT IS ALSO A QUESTION OF TACTICS. WE THINK THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS SOME HOMEWORK TO DO IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THE LONG DELAY SINCE 1966 IN SIGNING THE HUMAN RIGHTS COVENANTS WAS DISCOURAGING, AND WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY RATIFICATION IS SAID TO POSE SO MANY PROBLEMS. WE DO HOPE THAT THE U.S. SENATE WILL TRY TO AVOID SERIOUS RESERVATIONS TO THE COVENANTS WHEN IT DOES DECIDE UPON RATIFICATION OF THESE IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS. IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENTS, AMNESTY NEVER WANTS TO CREATE CONFLICTS. WE ARE NOT HERE TO OPPOSE GOVERNMENTS. WE ARE NOT AGAINST GOVERNMENTS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHIES PER SE. WHAT WE WANT ARE DISCUSSIONS WITH GOVERNMENTS. (WE ARE NOT IN THE BUSINESS OF NEGOTIATING WITH GOVERNMENTS BECAUSE WE HAVE NOTHING TO TRADE AWAY.) WE WANT TO BE ON SPEAKING TERMS WITH EVERY GOVERNMENT, AND WE TRY TO CONDUCT OURSELVES PROPERLY. FOR INSTANCE, WE SEND OUR REPORTS TO GOVERNMENTS BEFORE WE PUBLISH THEM. WE THINK THAT THIS IS EXPECTED AS GOOD BEHAVIOR; THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE A CHANCE TO READ WHAT WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS SOMETIME LATER. IN ESSENCE, THOUGH, WE ARE HARD IN MESSAGE, WE ARE PROPER AND DIPLOMATIC IN STYLE."

2. IN ADDITION TO THIS PUBLISHED SPEECH, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS EXPRESSED TO THE USG ITS WISH THAT ITS
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NATIONAL OR LOCAL SECTIONS NOT BE "LINKED" IN ANY WAY WITH ANY FOREIGN EMBASSY EVEN WERE THESE LINKS TO BE OF AN ENTIRELY FRIENDLY NATURE. IN RESPECT OF AI'S WISH, IT IS THEREFORE REQUESTED THAT U.S. EMBASSY PERSONNEL IN HOST COUNTRIES SHOULD NOT CONTACT AI REPRESENTATIVES, PARTICULARLY PERSONNEL ON MISSIONS ABROAD. OF COURSE, SHOULD AI REPRESENTATIVES CHOOSE TO CONTACT THE U.S. EMBASSY, EMBASSY OFFICIALS SHOULD BE COOPERATIVE. AI ACKNOWLEDGES THE USEFULNESS OF SELECTIVE, DISCREET EXCHANGES BUT AS A GENERAL RULE PREFERS THAT CONTACTS BE LIMITED. THEY PREFER CONTACT TO BE LARGELY AT THEIR OWN INITIATIVE OR THROUGH HA, THEIR WASHINGTON, NEW YORK OR LONDON OFFICES. IT IS OUR VIEW THAT THE USG ACCOMMODATE AI'S CONCERN TO MAINTAIN ITS INDEPENDENCE. CHRISTOPHER

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